

**U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE**  
**Newport, R.I.**

**OPERATIONAL MANEUVER FROM THE SEA  
IN ALLIANCES AND COALITIONS - THE PROBLEM OF  
INTERACTION IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT**

by

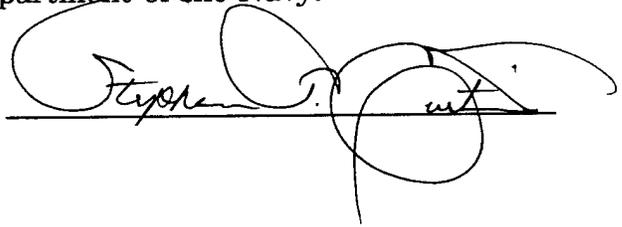
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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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## ABSTRACT

The Navy White Papers, "From the Sea" and "Forward...From the Sea", provided the foundation for a new concept in amphibious warfare operations known as Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS).<sup>1</sup> Capitalizing on major and anticipated technological advances in amphibious shipping, ship-to-objective delivery vehicles, and command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I) systems, the concept emphasizes mobility and maneuver in the projection of combat power ashore. Although no other navy can match the array of [amphibious] ships, personnel and techniques of the U.S...some other significant forces exist<sup>2</sup>, and are resident in our allies and future coalition partners.

As a global power with worldwide interests, the United States has for decades been involved in bilateral and multinational naval activities at sea through combined exercises and peacetime fleet interactions, participation in formal standing and "on-call" forces, and involvement with other navies in crisis response or wartime operations.<sup>3</sup> However, with regard to the latter two activities, the "technological edge" engendered by our emerging OMFTS capabilities and evolving doctrine has the potential of jeopardizing future combined amphibious operations. Unless addressed, the attempted integration of old and new doctrines, preparatory to an actual combined hostile operation, will readily reveal the dichotomy of "unwilling" versus "unable".

This technological divergence may inspire [our future coalition partners] to attempt to go it alone<sup>4</sup>, something we can ill-afford, politically or economically, now or in the future.

## PREFACE

Having participated in numerous amphibious operations with foreign navies during my career, I am readily aware of their ability to project combat power ashore; namely, in the same manner that we did from World War II until the late 1980s. Most recently, I had the opportunity to participate in a combined operation with a fledgling Combined Amphibious Forces, Mediterranean (CAFMED) and, despite our new OMFTS capabilities, the entire force operated within close range of a "hostile coast" - often anchored to launch landing craft - the landing force within visual range of the "enemy", and the ships and landing craft easy targets for present-day coastal weapons systems. Accordingly, this paper proposes possible alternatives for maximizing the integration of OMFTS and non-OMFTS capable naval amphibious forces, the product of which is an enhanced force enabling capability upon which the combatant commander can readily rely.

Although U.S. and foreign combatant, auxiliary, reserve force, preposition, merchant marine and commercial shipping often support and enhance amphibious-type operations, this paper will not discuss their contributions. Nor will it address the conduct of combined amphibious operations from the permissive (or non-hostile) Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) perspective, as OMFTS is of little consequence in such situations. Finally, except in the context of maneuvering amphibious shipping in support of a landing force commander, this paper will also not address movement or maneuver by ground forces ashore.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR**

The value of amphibious forces, as history has shown, are of immense importance in the conduct of war or hostile MOOTW. They can induce enemies to divert forces, fix defensive positions, divert major resources to coastal defense, or disperse forces.<sup>5</sup> In spite of these attributes, however, amphibious operations of the past had quantifiable faults.

By today's standards, the amphibious operations conducted by the United States and its allies, from the 1930s until the late 1980s, were slow and methodical. Practiced, executed and developed into doctrine, such operations defied most of the principles of war: incursions pitted strength against strength, and were heavily reliant upon operational fires provided by numerous naval gunships and aircraft carriers (economy of force); landing plans were extremely detailed and critically dependent upon timing (simplicity); except on those rare occasions where amphibious demonstrations proved fruitful, (surprise) was rare due to required advance force minesweeping and gunnery operations; (movement) was effected by landing craft, between ship and shore - the surf zone having supposedly been cleared of obstacles by shallow-water, pre-assault forces - but was severely limited by the underwater topography requisite in landing displacement craft; and, (mass)ing of forces occurred at the beach landing sites, but momentum necessary to continue the (offensive) was always hindered by an operational pause - precipitated by combat power and logistics support buildup on the beach<sup>6</sup> - prior to pushing-out to seize planned landing force objectives, and clearing the way for the assault follow-on echelon (AFOE). Invariably, pre-planned tactical objectives were achieved, but at a monumental cost in combined forces men and material.

The only truly significant "revolution" in amphibious force capabilities, over this 50 year period, came as a result of the introduction of the helicopter. Swift heliborne assault became a parallel complement to the slow, surface-borne assault and, for the first time, provided U.S. and allied amphibious and landing force commanders with a maneuver-type, vertical envelopment option for achieving tactical objectives. If anything, however, the disparity in speed and depth between the two types of ship-to-shore delivery methods exacerbated the problem of developing simple plans; proper sequencing of forces ashore, thus, took on new meaning.

The focus of the Cold War at sea did little to expand amphibious capabilities and doctrine, as the U.S. fleet and our allies centered our attention on countering the Soviet threat on the high seas. We quickly forgot, during this time, the old adage that "man lives on the land, not on the sea, and conflict at sea has strategic meaning only with reference to what its outcome enables or implies, for the course of events on land."<sup>7</sup> As that pseudo-war abated and the navy refocused its efforts on littoral warfare, the vacuum in doctrinal philosophy based upon resident amphibious capabilities became readily apparent.

Gone, or greatly reduced, are the abundant support forces - the minesweepers, cruisers, battleships and aircraft carriers - characteristic of a bygone era. In their place resides a much smaller force, largely incapable of strength-on-strength operations. However, due to recent advances in delivery vehicle and situational awareness technologies, and due to the strengths provided by joint inter-operability, the necessity for enormous supporting forces has nearly been negated. Today, U.S. amphibious forces are highly mobile and capable of effecting the movement and maneuver necessary to place assault forces in a position from which they can directly attack an enemy's operational strength or center of gravity.

Those navies which possess amphibious forces, including most of our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, recognize the advantages of these advances, but have generally been unable to afford to buy the technology. As a result, they maintain an amphibious capability which, except for the mobility provided by the helicopter, is relatively limited for the conduct of OMFTS. They are, in fact, more readily prepared to handle non-hostile MOOTW operations.

### **OMFTS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR**

With the introduction of the Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) into the operational amphibious forces in the late 1980s, maneuver of surface assault forces, like their heliborne complement, became a reality. Shipping, too, now no longer tied to a specific beach landing site while shepherding slow displacement craft, could maneuver to launch and recover helicopters and LCAC, at distances over the horizon (OTH). Although changes in doctrine have been slowly evolving, LCAC "cut the strings" of close-in, ship-to-shore movement and set the stage for what has become OMFTS.

OMFTS is not necessarily reliant on carrier or battleship operational fires; regards the shoreline as only a waypoint enroute to an assigned, operational or strategic objective; is unconcerned with underwater topography and, hence, able to cross up to 80 percent of the world's beaches without stopping; is self-sustainable to a point; and, is stealthy, poor weather/night-capable, highly maneuverable and fast. By expanding the battlespace and utilizing improved maneuver vehicles, our landing forces can employ non-linear tactics while moving between their ships and the objectives. No longer will the enemy know the landing sites and logical objectives by merely spotting the amphibious ships<sup>8</sup>, or be able to harden suspected landing sites based upon their knowledge of the local underwater topography.

The increased mobility, reach and depth capabilities of U.S. amphibious forces redefined how amphibious assaults would be conducted in the future. Further, installation of state-of-the-art C4I equipment on flag-configured amphibious ships greatly enhanced situational awareness in the littoral, as well. Future plans call for introduction of the tilt-rotor, medium-lift troop carrier (V-22 Osprey) and the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV) at the turn of the century. The Osprey and the AAAV are both OTH-capable and very fast in their respective elements.

In relation to the principles of war, final OMFTS doctrine will appropriately address previous shortfalls in amphibious doctrine. Offensive operations will be continuous (i.e. no operational pause) as forces ingress and mass against pre-planned operational objectives; speed and stealth of movement will increase force security and enhance surprise; and, economy of force will be obtained as forces attack enemy critical vulnerabilities supporting enemy strengths or center of gravity.

Proper operational phasing, synchronization, sequencing, coordination, continued force security over time, and sustainment of all forces involved will necessarily be dependent upon the specific operational or strategic objective(s) called-for in the landing plan. Combined with the increased width and breadth envisioned by OMFTS, it is unlikely that future operations of this nature will achieve the simplicity desired for an assault into hostile territory; and, the integration of combined, non-OMFTS capable amphibious forces will not make planning any more simple.

However, despite the evident disparity between amphibious and OMFTS doctrines practiced by other navies and the U.S., respectively, the significant capabilities possessed by both can be integrated and maximized for future exercises and hostile operations. However, the current NATO Allied Tactical Publication (ATP) for amphibious warfare does not reflect emerging OMFTS disciplines; nor does an Experimental Tactics (EXTAC)

publication, developed under NATO auspices, exist for use in multinational maritime amphibious operations.<sup>9</sup> Waiting until the "11th hour" to address important inter-operability issues is wrong, and denies the combatant commander - who is tasked with requesting additional forces when deemed necessary for a particular situation - of a true estimation of the capabilities of a combined enabling force.

## **ALLIANCES AND COALITIONS**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION**

Since the beginning of this century, there has been a strong common thread in the involvement of American forces in combat. Almost every time military forces have deployed from the United States it has been as a member of - most often to lead - coalition operations.<sup>10</sup> While we maintain the unilateral capability to wage decisive campaigns to protect U.S. and multinational security interests, our Armed Forces will most often fight in concert with regional allies and friends, as coalitions can decisively increase combat power and lead to a more rapid and favorable outcome to the conflict.<sup>11</sup> Further, building working relationships with friendly militaries also helps to offset reductions in U.S. force levels...[and] we may be able to rely on friendly nations to provide capabilities we can no longer readily provide for sustained periods, thus reducing requirements for U.S. forces.<sup>12</sup> Although political in nature, participation in alliances and coalitions lends legitimacy to actions<sup>13</sup>, and establishes influence to help achieve access to foreign waters, territory, airspace, governments and military assets.<sup>14</sup>

## COMBINED OMFTS

One of the fundamental principles of OMFTS is the integration of all organic joint and combined assets.<sup>15</sup> This is particularly important in view of the fact that U.S. amphibious lift, in particular, is already insufficient to meet the dual Major Regional Contingency requirement.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, with too few assets deployed to a specific area of responsibility, if the force present in the littoral area is not equal to the action contemplated and has to wait for reinforcement past the optimum time for action, the benefit of strategic agility is lost.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, since combatant commanders must often split Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) in order to meet normal peacetime commitments, if the needs of a specific situation demand an immediate hostile response utilizing assets organic to the entire ARG, opportunity may be lost, as well. The question is: How can non-OMFTS navies help offset OMFTS limitations precipitated by normal peacetime employment, or by the size and number of operational objectives planned for a particular hostile incursion?

The answer is that non-OMFTS capable forces must maintain the mobility - in the same manner as U.S. amphibious forces - so critical to the success of OMFTS. By inter-operating with U.S. amphibious forces, the combined force is capable of executing OMFTS. This ensures the initiative, agility, flexibility, depth and synchronization of total force actions, without the "seams" created by functional, or geographical, responsibility based upon capabilities (common combined force employment methods); seams which the enemy can readily exploit.

Command relationships aside, unity of effort in effecting a combined amphibious force hostile incursion is key - all participants must agree that OMFTS is a workable concept, must adhere to certain employment stratagems, and understand their role in executing the combined OMFTS landing plan.

## **OMFTS STRATAGEMS IN COMBINED OPERATIONS**

In order to properly execute OMFTS, U.S. amphibious forces must be employed within the constraints of some very specific criteria. For the combined amphibious force, this would be no less true. Accordingly, it must adhere to the following OMFTS stratagems in order to be successful:

- Heliborne and surface craft must be launched from distances over the horizon (OTH).
- The force and its assault craft must employ speed of maneuver in all actions.
- The force and its assault craft must employ deception to the maximum extent possible.
- Operations should be conducted at night to maximize stealth.
- Emission control (EMCON) must be exercised, to the maximum extent possible, consistent with safety.
- Actions must be based upon extremely accurate, timely and detailed intelligence of enemy force capabilities and disposition.
- Pre-assault forces must be heavily employed.

The latter two stratagems are key in ensuring the mission success of the combined forces. Specifically, precise intelligence determines where to create gaps in our enemy's defenses and pre-assault forces provide limited operational fires and the "eyes on target" requisite in actually creating them. Once created, the other stratagems provide the wherewithal to exploit the gaps. If the length and breadth of the operation demands operational fire support by non-organic aircraft or naval surface fire support (NSFS) assets, these will have to be requested; but, covertness, surprise and possibly deception may be sacrificed as a result.

With regard to these OMFTS stratagems, our NATO allies and future coalition partners are currently deficient in only two areas: situational awareness provided by state-of-the-art C4I, and surface and air assault delivery assets. The former can be provided by the timely dissemination of critical information to our coalition partners, although this is not easy in view of language barriers and differences in each partner's understanding of specific military terminology. There is considerable room for improvement in the standardization of C4I equipments; a topic which will be discussed later in this paper. Lack of the latter hinders freedom of mobility, precluding individual unit employment in the hostile environment. Offsetting surface and air assault delivery vehicle shortfalls requires creative employment of existing assets, as discussed below.

### **FORCE EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS**

Many minor navies operate [smaller] tank landing ships (LSTs), but they are used more in the logistics role than as part of a true amphibious warfare capability,<sup>18</sup> and therefore are not considered capable of contributing to OMFTS. A review of Table 1 reveals the number of LSD-size and larger ships which our potential allies possess or are projected to possess in the not too distant future. Each of these ships has a flight deck and most have a welldeck, as well. Additional flightdecks and welldecks, regardless of the types of craft which operate from them, are advantageous for combined force OMFTS employment, and therefore are a force multiplier.

**SPREAD-LOADING** - In those instances when the speed of assault so requires it, combined force commanders may elect to spread certain combat serials (men, material, assault craft, etc.) to be used in the assault, amongst combined force shipping. This allows a larger force to be launched than would be possible from a U.S.-only ARG.

**LILLYPAD OPERATIONS** - Like spread-loading, lilyypad operations allow the combined force commanders to utilize the additional decks and docks present in the combined force to more swiftly and effectively support landing force reinforcement and sustainability requirements. Assault craft returning from the initial assault may be refueled, reloaded or, in some cases, even repaired on an alternate ship. Without exception, dimensions of other navy welldecks preclude inter-operability with LCAC; however, combat serials may be shuttled between decks by displacement craft, in preparation for their delivery ashore by the next available LCAC.

**ALTERNATE REFUELING DECK/DOCK** - If neither spread-loading nor lilyypad operations is optimal for a given situation, combined forces can at least provide each other "gas station" services. This precludes too many assets attempting to refuel at one (or too few) locations, thus preventing reloading-refueling conflicts, greatly improving turn-around time and therefore speed of combat power build-up ashore.

**SPLIT ARG OPERATIONS** - If the area of operations which encompasses the landing force objectives is large and necessitates splitting available forces to more advantageous launch and recovery positions, the assignment of one (or more) non-OMFTS capable ship(s) to one that is capable allows greater flexibility in execution of the landing plan. Spread-loading, lilyypad operations, or alternate refuel/reload options greatly enhance the speed of localized combat power buildup ashore, as well.

**OPERATIONAL REACH (DEEP, NEAR, CLOSE)** - Because U.S. assault craft have the capability to reach operational objectives deep in enemy territory - a capability that will be even more pronounced with the advent of the V-22 and the AAV - combined commanders may elect to utilize them for the deep and near landing force objectives, and use conventional landing craft - possibly supported by heliborne assault - for landing force objectives which are close. Since this will necessitate moving shipping in to

distances under the horizon, operational fires, deception, surprise and seam avoidance must be deftly executed.

**PRE-ASSAULT FORCES** - Many other navies - especially our NATO allies - possess superb assault forces and the means to insert them. A definite force multiplier, combined pre-assault forces, covertly inserted prior to an assault, can data-transmit (to the flagship) important beach hydrography information and pictures of proposed surface insertion craft penetration points; provide timely intelligence pictures and reports of pre-planned landing force objectives; and, provide operational fires by securing critical landing force objectives prior to the actual landing.

**SUSTAINMENT** - Finally, combined amphibious forces can support OMFTS operations by performing shuttle logistics from the nearest base of operations, pending the arrival of inbound, follow-on shipping (MPF, APF, RRF, etc.) at a port which has been seized. Or, in those instances when a port is unavailable for follow-on shipping, they can shuttle equipment from the base of operations closest to the objective area to OMFTS forces offshore. Amphibious forces are particularly suited for transfer of necessary materials, "in stream", amongst the force. In certain situations, employment of combined amphibious force shipping in this manner may preclude the necessity of the combatant commander requesting preposition or afloat reserve shipping.

In those situations where national or international convention precludes a nation's forces from direct involvement ashore, some of the employment options outlined above may allow such nations to effectively support OMFTS operations from over the horizon, in international waters. The total force multiplier effect, remains, but the appearance will be of a much smaller force.

## **THE FUTURE**

Combined amphibious training, exercises and actual operations in the future must emphasize OMFTS and, to the maximum extent possible, should not be based upon functional capabilities or the establishment of area responsibilities. Many coalitions have sought to conduct tactical operations, battles, and engagements within national boundaries. However, this approach cedes an advantage to enemy commanders who may target precarious seams. It accepts a vulnerability that could be costly and reduces collective combat power by incrementally separating the parts from the whole.<sup>19</sup> In general, command organization should employ centralized direction, decentralized execution, and common doctrine.<sup>20</sup>

The reasons for maximizing combined amphibious force inter-operability are: (1) the possibility of continued drawdown in U.S. forces; (2) joint inter-operability in lieu of combined amphibious force capabilities will not be enough for moderate to large-scale operations; (3) combined training, exercises and operations create common understanding and help to standardize employment and equipment; and, (4) combined inter-operability contributes to doctrine formulation.

## **DOCTRINE**

There is no universal doctrine for coalition warfare; each alliance develops its own protocols and contingency plans.<sup>21</sup> However, due to the complexity of OMFTS operations, commonalities should be established in doctrine, practiced during combined exercises and adjusted as lessons are learned. Commonly developed doctrine makes it much easier to incorporate the amphibious forces of ad hoc coalition members, and it will also better prepare combined amphibious forces for actual operations. After all, notwithstanding our

recurring historical experience, we have at times been remarkably ill-prepared for coalition operations.<sup>22</sup>

## **C4I COMPATIBILITY**

The USN has a great advantage in its excellent "situational awareness" capabilities [and] many view this and advanced American technology as key sources of influence with European partners.<sup>23</sup>

*"Applying the tenets of combined doctrine relies on a [C4I] architecture that is capable of integrating the joint forces of all the nations in the coalition....Unless the architecture incorporates the ability to share with, and in turn receive from, other national forces, the battlefield will not be seamless and significant risks will be present. Moreover, absent a common doctrine, basic military terms differ from nation to nation. The result, generally, is a severe narrowing in the amount of information conveyed between coalition commanders. Overcoming this, as a minimum, requires multilingual software that ties back to a common operating system. Because of the need to be rapidly employable by many national forces, its software must be user-friendly and easy to learn."<sup>24</sup>*

Further, allies must share intelligence at the tactical and operational levels, as a minimum. As new collection means are introduced into our force, such as Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System or remotely piloted vehicles, we must have means to rapidly share their products with coalition partners. Intelligence sharing arrangements must be rapidly agreed, even if sources are not shared.<sup>25</sup>

## **CONTRIBUTIONS BY FUTURE ALLIANCE/COALITION NAVIES**

**COMBINED AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, MEDITERRANEAN (CAFMED)** - An offshoot of the Standing NATO Forces Mediterranean (SNFM), NATO has already taken the initiative in accelerating combined amphibious force inter-operability. Still a fledgling concept, this organization promises a valuable increase in combined amphibious force

exercises and training; and, will be a very good core around which to build an ad hoc coalition, especially should NATO revise its policies regarding Out of Area (OOA) operations.

**STANDARDIZATION** - Defense spending is falling in partner countries and in the United States.<sup>26</sup> In spite of this, however, NATO countries have been extremely successful in "selling" their governments on the importance of amphibious-type ships (*see Table 1*). Primarily due to these countries' corresponding shift in emphasis to the post-Cold War littoral, and because of recent worldwide operations wherein amphibious-type forces have been instrumental in non-hostile MOOTW operations, amphibious shipbuilding is enjoying a unique popularity. Those that aren't building them are attempting to buy them, based upon the number of countries which have purchased U.S. ships of the former Newport-class LST.<sup>27</sup> Although LSTs are, as previously stated, primarily sustainment ships, the importance countries have placed upon buying amphibious-type ships is telling; and, for those which are building the LSD-type and larger ships, the U.S. should enjoy the unintended fruits of their employment in support of OMFTS "hostile" exercises and hostile operations.

For the future, NATO and those other countries which possess amphibious forces should make every effort to standardize shipbuilding and assault craft assets; and, C4I equipments. These items make inter-operability of equipments, material and the personnel which operate them much easier to integrate. Note that, of the amphibious ships currently being built, only the Japanese "LST" will be inter-operable with LCAC. As a result, during combined exercises and actual operations, all others will have to work around the disparity in types of landing craft.

If the width and deck strength of amphibious ship welldecks could be standardized to accept LCAC and the future AAV, and the size and deck strength of flightdecks could all support launch and recovery of the V-22, inter-operability would be significantly enhanced. Simply stated, if such standardization were effected, other navies would become OMFTS-capable upon ship activation.

Many of our present-day allies and future coalition partners conducted amphibious operations with and fought alongside U.S. forces during both World War II and the Korean conflict. Gone for them, too, are all the supporting forces which made those forced incursions possible. However, for those countries building amphibious shipping in the belief that it will only be used for non-hostile MOOTW, they will be turning a blind eye on reality; and if so employed, be forfeiting their hostile incursion capabilities. If this is not the intent, then for them, OMFTS must become a reality.

**COMBINED TRAINING AND EXERCISES** - Far more than ad hoc ship visits, a predictable exercise pattern suggests active commitment and permanence. This is particularly important as we withdraw land and air forces and close bases.<sup>28</sup>

We and our NATO allies must dissect the U.S. draft OMFTS doctrine, and discuss its merits and limitations for combined operations. Once OMFTS doctrine has been finalized, our NATO allies will need to help us exercise it and, subsequently, update NATO amphibious doctrine to reflect combined OMFTS operations.

*"Standing coalitions should not need to rely on inventiveness and adaptability during conflict. Peacetime training should be designed to engage coalition forces in the most difficult and demanding tasks they may be asked to perform in war and to fathom the weak points that will cause friction under the most trying circumstances. The point is to identify, then eliminate or narrow the seams between forces that could reduce synergy and synchronization. Procedures that require multinational forces to operate seamlessly should be practiced routinely.*

*Because of the complexity of joint and combined operations, the required skills atrophy quickly. Training should be joint and should reoccur cyclically at the operational and tactical levels. This is essential both to build the basis for trust, which will be vital in war, and to identify the abilities and limitations of coalitions forces."<sup>29</sup>*

For the U.S. to avert emphasis from the important task of developing combined OMFTS doctrine - through training and exercises - is to admit that we are capable of executing OMFTS without the additional forces which our coalition partners can provide. For our partners, it would be an admission that forced entry is no longer a part of their repertoire. Neither must be allowed to become true.

### **CONCLUSION**

*"Can the United States gain military advantage from multinational arrangements? Will the military effectiveness of combined operations be so reduced as to raise unacceptable risks?"<sup>30</sup>*

Where OMFTS is concerned, both are good questions. The U.S. will never again conduct hostile incursions in the manner in which they were conducted under amphibious doctrine; support assets are unavailable and the costs too high, especially in view of the advantages offered by OMFTS. Force and asset mobility have altered how we do business. However, for more than just political reasons, we need the force enhancements which future allies and coalition partners can provide; and, we need them to be mobile with us.

*"Mobility is a key to decisive naval operations. The ability to maneuver ships into position to strike vulnerable targets, or to threaten amphibious assault at multiple locations along an extended coastline, is a significant tactical and operational advantage. After we have launched our strikes, our ships can press the advantage, maneuver out of range, or reposition themselves for the next strike phase."<sup>31</sup>*

Few partners with which to exercise higher technology procedures, differences in doctrine, lack of compatible communications and computer systems, differences in ROE, and disputes about C2 arrangements<sup>32</sup> are common arguments for "I'd just as soon do it myself". However, where OMFTS is concerned, such an attitude will earn us the opportunity to be the only enabling force in the world, whether our coalition partners provide supporting forces or not; a lot of responsibility, with no friends to fall-back on.

*"Often a coalition's cohesion will depend on the proportionate sharing of burdens, risks, and credit. All these can be most fairly and satisfactorily apportioned if the total force is able to operate as a single entity...Every improvement in coalition operations that we bring to the battlefield will have an impact on the success of operations and reduce the human toll for our own forces, as well as every one of our allies. We have the technology and experience to improve coalition warfare."<sup>33</sup>*

Until such time as shipping, equipments, and doctrine for OMFTS can be standardized, combined exercise and operation planning by landing force operational commanders should emphasize adherence to the OMFTS stratagems. In so doing, the employment options they elect to execute will enhance total force actions, and abide the principles of OMFTS and those of war.

**TABLE 1<sup>1</sup>**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
Brazil	2	LSD	Former Thomaston class
France	4	LSD	
Germany	1	LPH	Commission date 1999
Greece	1	LSD	
Italy	3	LPD	
Japan	1	LST	Size/type appears LPH; LCAC capable; commission date 1998
Netherlands	1	LPD	Commission date 1997
Spain	1	LPD	Commission date 1997
Taiwan <sup>2</sup>	2	LSD	World War II vintage
Britain	2	LPD	Currently building 2 LPD to replace these 1960s ships, and an LPH (commission dates 00, 02, and 98, respectively)

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<sup>1</sup> All data obtained from Jane's Fighting Ships 1996

<sup>2</sup> Two U.S. Newport-class LSTs, to be delivered this year, to replace two World War II-era LSDs used to resupply the Parcel Islands. Source: Antony Preston, Proceedings, March 1996, 112.

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